

In re Patent Application of:
PERKINSON ET AL.
Serial No. 09/845,103
Filing Date: APRIL 30, 2001

REMARKS

The claims have been amended to correct grammatical and spelling errors noted therein during the review of the application and to more concisely define applicants' invention in a manner which is believed to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art cited in the outstanding Office Action and thereby place the application in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of this application, accordingly, in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Before discussing the shortcomings of the prior art cited in the outstanding Office Action, the present invention will be briefly reviewed, in order that differences between the invention, particularly as defined in the amended claims, and the prior art cited in the outstanding Office Action may be more readily appreciated.

As is discussed in the initial portion of the present specification, frame relay-based packet switches, such as that shown in the simplified diagram of Figure 2 of the drawings, are configured to filter and selectively 'steer' packets through the frame relay switch, so as to route the packet to an appropriate output port based upon the results of the analysis of the packet. Indeed, this steering operation is what is described in the patent to Katsube et al 6,185,213, cited in the outstanding Office Action. In accordance with this conventional steering mechanism, an address-mapping routing table, such as that described in column 9, lines 14-49 of the patent to Katsube, et al may be employed. In accordance with this scheme, source and destination addresses

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of packets are used to controllably steer the packet through the frame relay switch.

Applicants' invention, on the hand, employs an array of packet analyzers, each of which has a respectively different configuration function. When a respective packet is presented to the switch, the packet is coupled to the packet analyzer which examines the contents of the packet to determine whether the protocol field of the packet corresponds to the configuration function of that analyzer. In effect, the packet analyzer array employed by the present invention is a protocol analyzer, as opposed to a source and destination address analyzer as in the patent to Katsume et al.

In an effort to clarify this distinction, Claims 1-8 have been amended to more particularly define the fact that the packet analyzers have respectively different configuration functions and that a respective one of these analyzers is operative to provide an output representative of whether or not the packet supplied thereto has a protocol that conforms with the configuration function of that respective packet analyzer. Applicants believe that this clarifying language more particularly defines the invention in terms of its architecture and functionality, when compared with the claims as originally filed which refer to an analysis of the contents of the packet containing prescribed information.

The secondary reference to Merchant et al 6,775,290 like the patent to Katsume et al referenced above, also contains no description or suggestion of providing a plurality or array of packet analyzers, whose respective configuration functions are associated with respectively different protocols, so as to enable the array to readily accept a packet when the protocol

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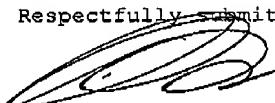
of the packet conforms with the configuration array of one of the packet analyzers within the array.

In view of the manner in which the claims have been amended to more particularly define applicants' invention, as discussed above, each of the grounds of rejection tendered in the outstanding Office Action is respectively traversed and applicants respectfully submit that, in the absence of a citation of prior art which teaches or suggests the invention as delineated in amended Claims 1-8, that the present application is in condition for allowance. A notice to that effect, is, accordingly, earnestly solicited.

Should any minor informalities need to be addressed, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including Extension of Time fees, to Deposit Account No. 01-0484 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,



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